Under the current policy, lands which are temporarily surplus to Defence requirements can be leased out by Defence Estate Officer to ex-Servicemen for agricultural purposes subject to the following conditions :—

(i) The lease period is normally for five years at a time.

(ii) The income of the ex-Serviceman from all sources, including pension, should not exceed Rs. 1,000 per month.

(iii) The ex-Serviceman should not be gainfully employed and should not own 5 acres or more of irrigated land or 10 acres or more of non-irrigated land.

(iv) The land leased, together with the land already owned or held no lease from any source by the ex-Serviceman, should not exceed 5 acres of wet or 10 acres of dry land.

(v) Where land is leased out to a co-operative society of ex-Servicemen, each member of the cooperative society should fulfil the above conditions and the total land leased out to such a cooperative society should not exceed the sum total of eligibility for land in respect of ex-Servicemen comprising the society according to the aforesaid conditions. Available land is distributed among all the eligible ex-Servicemen equitably subject to a minimum of 1 acre of irrigated land or 2 acres of dry land per ex-Servicemen, preference being given to the poorest. Where ex-Servicemen or their co-operatives do not come forward to take lease of temporarily surplus lands, such lands can also be leased out to landless poor persons whose total holding (owned as well as held on lease from any other source) is less than 5 acres wet or 10 acres dry and whose monthly income from all sources is Rs. 500 or less. The area of land to be leased to such persons should not exceed 5 acres of wet land or 10 acres of dry land including the land already owned or held on lease from any source. Applications from ex-Servicemen are entertained through the local District Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen Boards and those of landless persons through Collectors/ Tehsildars.

The Director General, Defence Estates has been delegated powers to grant leases for petrol pumps, subject to availability of defence land. The Director General, Defence Estates has also been delegated powers to grant licences to registered educational institutions for use of defence lands, which are not required for defence purposes, as play grounds on payment of nominal fee for a period not exceeding five years at a time. The licence granted is liable to be rescinded at any time by giving a notice of one month.

Profit of Defence Undertakings

381. SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether 27 per cent increase has been registered in the profit of all the defence public sector undertakings ;

(b) if so, the details thereof, undertaking-wise ; and

(c) whether the profit is due to rise in the prices or for better production ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) The increase in the profit before tax of all the Defence Public Sector Undertakings in the year 1990-91 was 25.06% over the previous year.

(b) The details are given in the statement attached. (*See* below).

(c) The overall increase in the profit before tax in 1990-91 compared to 1989-90 was partly due to increase in value of sales in 1990-91 in comparison to 1989-90 and partly due to better management practices adopted by the Companies.

Statement

The undertaking-wise details of the profit before tax for the years 1989-90 *and* 1990-91 *are as follows*:

Rs. in crore

Sl. No.	Name of the PSU	1989-90	1990-91
1	HAL	34.07	48.68
2	BEL	41.39	53.97
3	BEML	65.51	67.14
4	MDL	(—)3.13	3.21
5	GRSE	5.98	17.52
6	GSL	7.14	13.67
7	BDL	17.52	6.62
8	MIDHANI	0.54	0.57
	TOTAL	169.02	211.38

Recruitment in Army

382. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a steep fall in army recruitment from 1983-84 till date ;

(b) what has been the annual recruitment level in 1990-91 and how it compares with 1983-84 ; and

(c) what specific steps are being taken to attract right candidate for recruitment in defence forces ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) and (b) Recruitment to Army in a particular year is decided on the basis of vacancies arising due to discharge, retirements etc. besides requirements due to new raisings, if any. It is not desirable to disclose actual recruitment figures in public interest.

(c) Response to recruitment into the Army has been overwhelming in the last decade. There has been no shortfall in intake since 1983-84. To ensure recruitment of the best candidates, physical examination, written test, interviews/aptitude tests and medical examination are conducted and selections are made strictly on merit.

Explosion in Ordnance Factory, Aravankadu

383. SHRI S. MADHAVAN :

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any explosion occurred at the Ordnance Factory at Aravankadu in Tamil Nadu State in May, 1992 ;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ;

(c) whether any enquiry was conducted to find out the reasons for the explosion and if so, what is the outcome of such enquiry ;

(d) what are the details of damage to life and property ; and

(e) what are the details of compensation paid to the deceaseds' families and to injured people ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The explosion accident occurred in the Washing House of Nitroglycerine manufacturing Unit of Cordite Factory.

(c) Yes, Sir. An enquiry has been conducted by a Board of Inquiry. The recommendations of the Board of Inquiry along with the comments of the Ordnance Factory Board are under consideration of Government.

(d) Six factory employees lost their lives. The loss to property and material has been assessed at about Rs. 14 lakhs.

(e) Details are given in the Statement. (See below).